

## Shifting the paradigm: The use of multiple mode assessment strategies in distance teacher training programmes for inclusivity

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### Over view

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## Introduction

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- In distance education lecturers & students are separated in time and space[Yates & Tilson, 2000].
- Use of technology & study materials provides access, learning opportunities & methods, i.e. Teachers can be trained-taught & assessed at their schools- opportunity to learn & earn
- Assessment sine qua non to teacher training at a distance. Just like navigators who keep recording exact position of a ship distance teacher training lecturers assess students to appraise & reappraise the position of students, control & evaluate their competencies in content knowledge & pedagogical skills.

## Introduction ctd

- Traditional assessment= tests/ examinations utilised by most by both conventional & distance education institutions unsuitable for teacher training at a distance, Why?
- Narrow & unable to capture trainees' knowledge & skills adequately. This paper calls for a paradigm's shift= multiple Ass modes

## Distance teacher training in Africa: Rationale

- Awareness of education as foundation stone for development & UNSECO's EFA programme have increased the demand for education in Africa
- Quest for education means more schools & more schools means more teachers.
- Teacher attrition in Africa due to retirement, HIV/AIDS, Poor conditions of service & movement of teachers
- Face to face training alone cannot meet high demand for teachers
- Traditional face to face institutions now joining forces with distance education Universities to train more teachers. Illiteracy stumbling block to Africa's dev hence need to train more teachers at a distance



## Traditional assessment for distance teacher trainees: A critique

- Traditional assessment characterised only by pencil & paper test or examination, marks & certificates [McKay1998].
- Major weaknesses: parochial, 'One shot' procedure. Encourages cramming, reproduction of facts= banking system of education Freire [1978]
- Norm referenced = compares achievement, not individual potentiality i.e. not student centred



## **Traditional assessment for distance teacher trainees: A critique ct'd**

- Traditional assessment in teacher training emphasises the process & not outcomes E.g. Doesn't allow students to reconstruct meaning, just reproduction of information.
- Rating of trainee teachers' classroom practice very short & based on few observable things e.g. lesson preparation, use of teaching aids etc Fails to find out whether trainees' teaching approaches lead to effective learning.
- Traditional assessment not holistic & inclusive hence need to shift the paradigm

## **Paradigm's shift: Multiple mode assessment strategies for inclusivity**

- Inadequacies in traditional assessment calls for a paradigm's shift i.e. Use of multiple mode assessment strategies.
- Why? To make assessment of teacher trainees more democratic, learner centred, holistic, inclusive [broad] & authentic
- How? Grading of distance teacher trainees should be continuous & cover test, examination, use of portfolio , project, anecdotal records & observation.
- Marks awarded for all these aspects must culminate in a total final mark
- Portfolio= A collection of a student's best work as evidence of learning. Detailed picture of students' achievement, helps students to reflect & track their progress.

### Paradigm's shift: Multiple Mode Assessment Strategies ct'd

- Project = student own learning initiative & activity to acquire new skills e.g. classroom discipline, painting, gardening, how to collect data etc. Student-centred & opportunity to learn socio-ec. skills to enhance teaching
- Anecdotal records = interesting short account of a student. Opportunity to document, reflect and comment on life experiences. Students may share and learn from experiences to enhance teaching e.g. sports, music, cultural activities [indigenous songs & dance]. Students' competencies here can be assessed
- Observation [Work Integrated Learning], Classroom practices observed & evaluated by peers, lecturers or appointed teaching experts; constructive criticism for improved teaching

## Conclusion

- This paper has pointed out that the single assessment mode of test or examination is inadequate for the training of teachers at a distance
- It therefore argued for multiple assessment strategies to minimise deficiencies in assessment
- The paper concludes that:
- For assessment of teacher trainees to be fair, authentic, democratic, holistic and inclusive distance teacher training institutions should utilise a variety of [ assessment] strategies.

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